THE

WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

For MONDAY, January 27, 1800.

Intereſting Letter, written by Columbus, the celebrated Diſcoverer of America.

[From Edwards's Hiſtory of the Weſt Indies.]

THERE is (ſays Mr. Edwards) preſerved among the journals of the Honourable Council in Jamaica, a very old volume in manuſcript, conſiſting of diaries and reports of Governors, which relate chiefly to the proceedings of the army, and other tranſactions, in the firſt ſettlement of the colony. In this book is to be found the tranſlation of a letter to the King of Spain, ſaid to be written by Columbus during his confinement on this iſland. As it appears to me to bear marks of authenticity, I ſhall preſent it to my readers. It was written, probably, about eight months after the departure of his meſſenger, Diego Mendez, who had attempted to reach Hiſpaniola in an Indian canoe. Hearing nothing from him in that interval, Columbus ſeems to have relinquiſhed every hope of relief, and to have written this letter in an hour of deſpondency, not as having any probable means of ſending it to Spain; but on the idea that it would be found after his death. It is as follows:

A Letter from CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, *in Jamaica, to* KING FERDINAND.

Jamaica, 1504.

DIEGO MENDEZ, and the papers I ſent by him, will ſhew your Highneſs what rich mines of gold I have diſcovered in

Veraqua, and how I intended to have left my brother at the river Belin, if the judgments of Heaven, and the greateſt misfortunes in the world, had not prevented it. However, it is ſufficient that your Highneſs, and your ſucceſſors, will have the glory and advantage of all; and that the full diſcovery and ſettlement are reſerved for happier perſons than the unfortunate Columbus. If God be ſo merciful to me, as to conduct Mendez to Spain, I doubt not but he will convince your Highneſs, and my great miſtreſs, that this will not only be a Caſtile and Leon; but a diſcovery of a world of ſubjects, lands, and wealth, greater than man's unbounded fancy could ever comprehend, or avarice itſelf covet; but neither he, this paper, nor the tongue of mortal man, can expreſs the anguiſh and afflictions of my body and mind, nor the miſery and dangers of my ſon, brother, and friends! Already have we been confined ten months in this place, lodged on the open decks of our ſhips, that are run on ſhore and laſhed together; thoſe of my men that were in health, have mutinied under the Porras's of Seville; my friends, that were faithful, are moſtly ſick and dying; we have conſumed the Indians' proviſions, ſo that they abandon us. All, therefore, are like to periſh by hunger, and theſe miſeries are accompanied with ſo many aggravating circumſtances, that render me the moſt wretched object of misfortune this world ſhall ever ſee; as if the diſpleaſure of Heaven ſeconded the envy of Spain, and would puniſh, as criminal, thoſe undertakings and diſcoveries which former ages would have acknowledged as great and meritorious actions! Good Heaven, and you holy ſaints that dwell in it, let the King, Don Ferdinand, and my illuſtrious miſtreſs, Donna Iſabella, know that my zeal for their ſervice and intereſt hath brought me thus low; for it is impoſſible to live and have afflictions equal to mine! I ſee, and with horror apprehend my own, and for my ſake, my unfortunate and deſerving people's deſtruction. Alas! piety and juſtice have retired to their habitations above; and it is a crime to have undertaken and performed too much! As my miſery makes my life a burthen to myſelf, ſo far the empty title of Viceroy and Admiral render me obnoxous to the hatred of the Spaniſh nation.

It is viſible that all methods are adopted to cut the thread that is breaking; for I am in my old age oppreſſed with inſupportable pains of the gout, and am now languiſhing and expiring with that and other infirmities, among ſavages, where I have neither medicines nor proviſions for the body—prieſt nor ſacrament for the ſoul. My men in a ſtate of re-

volt—

volt—my brother, my ſon, and thoſe that are faithful, ſick, ſtarving, and dying; the Indians have abandoned us, and the Governor of St. Domingo has ſent rather to ſee if I am dead, than to ſuccour us, or carry me alive hence; for his boat neither delivered a letter nor ſpoke with us, nor would receive any letter from us, ſo I conclude your Highneſs's officers intend that here my voyages and life ſhould terminate.

O bleſſed Mother of God! that compaſſionates the miſerable and oppreſſed, why did not cruel Bodavilla kill me, when he robbed me and my brother of our dearly purchaſed gold, and ſent us to Spain, without trial, crime, or ſhadow of miſconduct? Theſe chains are all the treaſures I have, and they ſhall be buried with me, if I chance to have a coffin or grave; for I would have the remembrance of ſo unjuſt an action periſh with me, and, for the glory of the Spaniſh name, be eternally forgotten.

Let it not bring a farther infamy on the Caſtilian name; nor let ages to come, know there were any wretches ſo vile in this, that think to recommend themſelves to your Majeſty, by deſtroying the unfortunate and miſerable Chriſtopher Columbus, not for his crimes, but for his ſervices in diſcovering and giving Spain a new world! As it was Heaven itſelf that inſpired and conducted me to it! the Heavens will weep for me, and ſhew pity! Let the earth, and every ſoul in it, that loves juſtice and mercy, weep for me! And you, O glorified ſaints of God, that know my innocence and ſee my ſufferings here, have mercy! for though this preſent age is envious and obdurate, ſurely thoſe that are to come will pity me, when they are told that Chriſtopher Columbus, with his own fortune, ran the hazard of his own and brother's life, and with little or no expence to the crown of Spain, in ten years and four voyages, rendered greater ſervices than ever mortal man did to prince or kingdom, yet was left to periſh, without being charged with the leaſt crime, in poverty and miſery—all but his chains being taken from him, ſo that he who gave Spain another world, had neither ſafety in it, nor yet a cottage for himſelf nor his wretched family.

But ſhould Heaven ſtill perſecute me, and ſeem diſpleaſed with what I have done, as if the diſcovery of this new world may be fatal to the old; and, as a puniſhment, bring my life to a period in this miſerable place; yet do you, good angels, you that ſuccour the oppreſſed and innocent, bring this paper to my great miſtreſs. She knows how much I have done, and will believe what I have ſuffered for her glory and ſervice;

vice; and will be ſo juſt and pious as not to let the children of him that has brought to Spain ſuch immenſe riches, and added to it vaſt and unknown kingdoms and empire, want bread, or ſubſiſt only on alms. She, if ſhe lives, will conſider that cruelty and ingratitude will bring down the wrath of Heaven; ſo that the wealth I have diſcovered ſhall be the means of ſtirring up all mankind to revenge and rapine, and the Spaniſh nation ſuffer hereafter for what envious, malicious, ungrateful people do now.*

* Columbus was cleared from the above accuſation, of which he ſo bitterly and juſtly complains. He died in Spain 1506.—*Editor.*

CHARACTERS *in* REAL LIFE.

(Concluded from Page 55.)

THUS encouraged, Frederic eagerly awaited the arrival of Mr. Diſcount. Wiſeman received him with great coldneſs, while Lady Steel ſhewed evident marks of contempt. The broker, who had every appearance of a foreign religion as well as nation, was dreſſed in black velvet breeches and waiſtcoat, a pompadour coat with large gilt buttons, ſquare toed ſhoes, gold buckles, and a perriwig highly powdered, which made a curious contraſt with the yellow tinge of his complexion. Impreſſed with the dignity of Lady Steel, and at that of the French Counteſs, for he had ſeldom been in the company of perſons of rank, he was evidently embarraſſed. When he ventured to ſpeak to either, he roſe mechanically from his chair, bowed to the ground, and repeated *my Lady* twenty times in every ſentence. They were delighted with his confuſion, and kept the whole table in a roar at his expence: They repeatedly aſked him ſome queſtions, which as certainly produced half a dozen bows, and as many "my ladies." They artfully took this opportunity, when he was eating of ſome favourite diſh, and by the interruption put his patience to no little trial.

As theſe queſtions were of courſe principally directed to his concerns, his anſwers bore every mark of his profeſſion. "How were the three per cents. to-day, Mr. Diſcount?" aſked Lady Steel. Pulling the napkin from his button hole, and reſpectfully bending his body, he replied, with his mouth ſtill full, "*Dey vere* little down in *de* morning, my Lady; but

but *tings* did look upward in *de* evening, ended at ſixty-three, three quarters and one ſixteenth: Expect *dey vil* get up more higher to-morrow, ſo *dey tink* in the city, but do not pretend to ſay ſo from any *autority*, my Lady: *You* Ladyſhip *do* know *des tings* better *as* me, you move in *de* higher circles." Again he bowed, and again the company burſt into a roar. After repeated queſtions of this ſort, which he always anſwered with the ſame humility, the ſame foreign accent, and the ſame technical cant, the ladies at length retired, and gave Mr. Diſcount a ſhort releaſe. He was not much better treated by the young men of the party, excepting Latimer, who was little inclined to laugh at him from whom alone he expected relief in his diſtreſſes. As he let out more than once, that no man was better known in 'Change Alley than Abraham Diſcount, Frederic determined to ſay nothing in the preſence of Mr. Wiſeman, but to call on him the next day.

Mr. Diſcount pretended much ſurprize at Frederic's viſit; and after hearing his ſtatement, declared his total inability to aſſiſt him. Frederic intreated him with warmth. Diſcount calmly declared the thing impoſſible. At length, after much altercation, he promiſed he would ſee "*vat* could be done," and deſired him to call that day ſe'nnight. At the appointed time, the anxious Frederic repeated his viſit. Mr. Diſcount was very ſorry all his own caſh was ſo employed that he could not call it it in, and "he *dat* had the *monies*," to whom he meant to apply, was not yet come to town. Another week of trembling expectation for Frederic. At length Mr. Abraham Diſcount introduced his friend Mr. Iſraeli, who, after the uſual objections of minority, ſcarcity of money, depreſſion of the ſtocks, hazard, penalties of uſury, &c. offered to lend one thouſand pounds on the following *reaſonable* terms: Two hundred pounds to be immediately returned as a premium, a bond given for fifteen hundred pounds, payable on Frederic's coming of age, and an engagement to pay a further ſum of one thouſand pounds, in caſe the Ducheſs of Annan ſhould bequeath him, at her death, a legacy equal to that amount.

Exorbitant as were theſe terms, Latimer felt himſelf obliged to ſubmit. He had no other means of leaving the univerſity with credit, or ſatisfying his own peace of mind; and for reputation and tranquillity can too great a price be given? He ſigned the bond, and the engagement mentioned before, and received the eight hundred pounds. The Baronet had been his confidant and adviſer through the whole buſineſs;

buſineſs; but Mr. Wiſeman pretended to know nothing of the tranſaction.

Latimer, delighted at having it in his power to diſcharge all his little embarraſſments, was preparing to ſet out for Oxford for that purpoſe, when the following letter was put into his hands:

Berkeley-ſquare,
Tueſday Morning.

" DEAR LATIMER,

" I am ſorry to be troubleſome, but an unfortunate run of bad fortune laſt night at Pharo obliges me to remind you of the thouſand pounds which you owe me. I have hitherto abſtained from applying to you on the ſubject, as I feared to diſtreſs you, but as you yeſterday received eight hundred pounds, in procuring which I was happy to be able to aſſiſt you, I hope you will conſider the following propoſition as an additional mark of my friendſhip. If you will immediately pay me the eight hundred pounds now in your poſſeſſion, I will cancel your bond for one thouſand. The liberality of this offer muſt ſtrike you; and I am ſure muſt meet your approbation, particularly as debts of honour are always firſt paid. As to your creditors, give them notes payable at two years. Their anger cannot injure you at any rate. You are under age, and conſequently not ſubject by law to their demands. I only hint this to ſatisfy your ſcruples, and to remove any uneaſineſs you may feel in poſtponing the intended payment of your Oxford debts.

" You will oblige me much by ſending the money in the courſe of the day: And, with ſincere regard, I remain,

" Your's, very truly,

" WILLIAM STEEL."

[This plot againſt Frederic is afterwards developed by his friend Mr. Deering, in the following hiſtory, which ſerves to complete a portrait, of which many will gueſs at the original.]

" Good God!" cried Mr. Deering, " is it poſſible that you did not know that notorious villain, Jew Solomon, the uſurer?"

" What do you mean?" ſaid Frederic, " I ſpeak of Mr. Wiſeman, of Berkeley-ſquare, a gentleman of character and fortune, whoſe elegant hoſpitality may vie with that of the firſt Duke in the kingdom."

" True, alſo," calmly continued Deering; " yet, notwithſtanding this fine houſe in Berkeley-ſquare, Mr. Wiſe-

man and Jew Solomon are one and the ſame perſon! the former name is only a convenient tranſlation of the latter, which conceals the degrading memorial of his original ſituation. I know his hiſtory perfectly. He commenced his career in life by ſelling flippers, and buying broken glaſs about the ſtreets: He finiſhed his education by becoming clerk to a low attorney of his own perſuaſion, who promoted him to that *diſtinguiſhed* place for his aptitude in ſwearing whatever his maſter choſe to dictate, and for the happy genius he diſplayed in aſſiſting him in the very *reſpectable* branches which he purſued in the profeſſion. He was a perfect camelion, and could in one day aſſume many different forms. If a bail was wanting in the morning, Solomon, with the aſſiſtance of a ſmart wig, gold-headed cane, and long great coat, became in one minute a reſpectable tradeſman from the Minories. If a witneſs was next required to ſave the *valuable* life of one of his employer's clients at the Old Bailey, he was inſtantly a Yorkſhire farmer, and would depoſe with great exactneſs to the preſence of the priſoner in that county at the time of the robbery committed; and if a ſignature or atteſtation were omitted by a teſtator, every form was eaſily ſupplied by his ſkilful pen.

"His talents in theſe *honourable* tranſactions became rather too celebrated, and Mr. Solomon found it neceſſary to try the air of another climate. He retired to Portugal, turned gentleman, and kept a houſe for play. Having realized ſome money, he launched out into certain uſurious ſpeculations, which happened to draw the notice of the Inquiſition, and Mr. Solomon was glad to purchaſe his liberty on condition of leaving the country immediately. He went thence to Italy, aſſumed the character of a Portugueſe nobleman, wore a ſtar, and called himſelf Le Marquis de Solono. In this character he gained admittance into the beſt ſocieties, and had a happy opportunity of exerciſing his talents.

"After pillaging many perſons of fortune at play, and particularly ſeveral young Engliſhmen on their travels, he became acquainted at Venice with Lady Steel, then a widow, not of the beſt reputation. As he knew from undoubted authority that ſhe had a jointure of ſix hundred pounds a year, ſhe became an object worthy his attention. Report ſays, that her Ladyſhip did not keep the impatient lover in ſuſpenſe, and that long ere the holy ceremonies of wedlock had made them 'one and indiviſible,' they inhabited the ſame apartment. Be that as it may, he was too much a man of honour to break his word, as he was intereſted

reſted in keeping it; and he was united to her, firſt by the forms of the Romiſh church, then in the Engliſh chapel, and ſome time afterward in a ſynagogue of his own perſuaſion. Lady Steel, who had been principally allured to this marriage by the ſound of his title, and the ſplendour of his ſtar, had the mortification ſoon to diſcover that her worthy lord was the ſon of an old-clothes-man in Duke's Place. He had originally eſcaped detection by a conſtant change of place; but his marriage, and the fortune of his wife, tempted him to remain at Venice ſome months. The Portugueſe Ambaſſador made enquiries, learned his true character, and took the liberty one evening of turning him publicly out of the theatre; acquainting him, at the ſame time, that if he did not immediately leave the territories of the republic, he ſhould obtain an order for his arreſt. The Jew obeyed, and decamped the next morning, with his diſconſolate dowager and her family, of whom your worthy friend the Baronet formed a part. As ſhe was his wife, there was no remedy left but to keep up appearances as well as poſſible. By her advice Mr. Solomon returned to London, where his youthful exploits were now forgotten, and under the Angliſed name of Wiſeman, commenced man of faſhion, though, not being able to get rid of his Jewiſh accent and foreign complexion, he condeſcended to acknowledge he had been for many years a merchant abroad. A ſplendid houſe and flaming equipage were immediately prepared. Buoyed up by theſe appearances, and the rank of Lady Steel, he has contrived to live ſome years in ſplendour and affluence, on the credulity of inexperienced youth. The elegant hoſpitality you ſpoke of, is the attraction by which he firſt draws to his table every young man whoſe expectations render him an object of his prey, and his exquiſite art conſiſts in letting nothing appear under his roof which can excite ſuſpicion, or ſubject him to puniſhment; his champagne is uſed as an incentive to play, but gaming is not ſuffered at his houſe. He always takes care to have perſons in the company who propoſe adjourning to ſome faſhionable Pharo table, with which he is connected, but he never himſelf accompanies them, and he often even pretends to diſſuade them from going. Though he does not appear, he gets the greater part of thoſe ſums of which they are pillaged, and a ſtill greater profit accrues to him from the loans which their neceſſities oblige them to negociate. He is always the confidant of his young friends, though he as conſtantly declines having any concern in their money tranſactions; and by the aſſiſtance of Mr. Diſcount and Mr. Iſ-

raeli, who are merely his agents, purpoſely thrown in their way, under different pretences, he gets a treble advantage from their ruin. By this happy artifice, he has hitherto eſcaped the puniſhment of the law, though his character has been more than once impeached.

"As to the Baronet, his father's eſtates being deeply mortgaged, his income, excluſively of his mother's jointure, was originally very ſmall, and even that he rendered ſtill leſs by his early imprudencies. I underſtand he has lately become a kind of apprentice to his worthy father-in-law, and by your account appears a very able proficient. You will be ſurpriſed at my knowing theſe facts ſo exactly, but you may depend on my accuracy. I have lately had a melancholy reaſon to aſcertain them. A near relation of mine cut his throat only a twelvemonth ſince, in conſequence of being ruined by the arts of this hoary villain."

Obſervations on the Controverſy about the Commencement of the Nineteenth Century.

[From the Preface to "An Ode for the New Century," written by H. J. Pye, Eſq. Poet Laureat.]

THE controverſy about the commencement of the nineteenth century, which has lately ſo much occupied the public mind, being of conſequence to me, who am officially called on to give a public opinion on it, I very early turned my thoughts to the ſubject, and ſoon adopted the notion moſt generally received—that January 1, 1801, would be the firſt day of the nineteenth century.

I found, however, all authority drawn from former precedents againſt me; I found that the Secular Maſque of Dryden was performed at Drury Lane Theatre early in the year 1700; and that Prior's Carmen Seculare was written for the ſame year, and obviouſly for the 1ſt of January. Theſe examples were ſufficient authority for me, independently of their ſhewing the received opinion of that time. I found alſo in the ſchedule to the Act of Parliament for altering the ſtyle, and which is printed in all the Common Prayer Books, theſe words:—"For the next century, that is from the year 1800 to the year 1899 inclusive."*

* Though the meaning of this is very clear, yet, like ſome other parts of other Acts of Parliament, it is not very accurately expreſſed. See the next note.

In the French Encyclopedie, article *Lettre Dominicale*, we find, "*Il changera en* 1800, *en* 1900, *en* 2100, *&c. en un mot au commencement de chacun des ſiecles dont la premiere année n'eſt pas biſſextile.*" And again under *Cycle Solaire*, explaining the tables, it ſays,—"*La premiere de ces tables ſerà pour le ſiecle qui a commencé par l'année* 1600; *là ſecond pour les ſiecles qui commencent par les années* 1700, 2100, 2500, 2200, 3400, *&c.*"

There is yet a ſtronger authority, ariſing from the hiſtory of the inſtitution of the Chriſtian era, as it is uſually called, though now known not to be reckoned from the real birth of our Saviour, but which makes no difference with reſpect to the preſent queſtion.

A native of Scythia, Dionyſius Exiguus, ſo named from his ſtature, who exerciſed the functions of Abbot at Rome in the ſixth century, thinking it diſgraceful that the Chriſtians ſhould reckon their years from the foundation of a city which was the ſeat of their perſecutors, reſolved to introduce a new era from the birth of Chriſt, which he fixed on the 25th of December, in the year of Rome, 753; but to accommodate it to the Roman calendar, he reckoned from the 1ſt of January enſuing, in the manner that he exemplified by the following table of the firſt century, and on which the calculation of the beginning and cloſe of the century juſt commenced in the table in our Common Prayer Books is founded.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10, &c.

Thus much for authority. It now remains to ſhew how the difference of opinion has ariſen.

Thoſe who maintain that the nineteenth century does not begin till January 1ſt, 1801, conſider the year one to mean the whole of the firſt year from 0 to 1. Thoſe, on the contrary, who, following the above authorities, conſider it as commencing January 1ſt, 1800, conceive 1800 not to mean the 1800th year, but that atom of time, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, paſt before we can ſay it is, that marks the completion of the 1800th year from Chriſt,* as one o'clock does the completion of the firſt hour; marking the cardinal

* This may poſſibly be illuſtrated by an anecdote of an indictment being ſet aſide becauſe it ſtated that the crime was committed between the hours of four and five, which was impoſſible; it ſhould have been between four and five o'clock. On the moſt awful event that

cardinal number of years from the event, and not the ordinal number of the year. It muſt be acknowledged that Iſaacſon, and after him Blair and Playfair, reckon according to the laſt mode; not ſo Cardanus Rider, who I preſume is as good authority. He, in his chronology for the preſent year, to take one ſplendid example from many, tells us Lord Nelſon's victory happened 1798 years after Chriſt, and that it is two years ſince it happened. ‖

The hours of the day on a clock, the mile-ſtones on the road, a carpenter's rule, the manner of reckoning the degrees of latitude and longitude from the equator, or the firſt meridian, all confirm this hypotheſis, as marking not the whole ſpaces of their reſpective meaſures, but the end of them; and eſpecially the years of a man's life. When a man ſays he is thirty, he does not mean that he is in his thirtieth year, but that thirty years have elapſed ſince his birth.†

Having ſaid thus much in defence of myſelf and the authorities I follow, I beg leave to deprecate the reſentment of thoſe who are of a different opinion, for they are in general very warm in their cauſe. I do not poſitively inſiſt that they are in the wrong; I only mean to ſhew on what grounds and on what authority I am in the wrong, ſhould I happen to be ſo; a favour I have ſeldom had granted by thoſe with whom I have argued *viva voce*.

that ever happened, the ninth hour is uſed for the completion of that hour, or as we ſhould now ſay, nine o'clock. Matthew, ch. xxvii. ver. 46. Mark, ch. xv. ver. 34. The Romans reckoned their hours in this manner, and ſometimes their years; otherwiſe the precept of Horace, "*Nonum prematur in annum*," has been always wrongly tranſlated.

‖ In a late publication on diſtinguiſhed characters of the laſt year, it is thus deſcribed, 1799—1800. This is exactly according to the table of Dionyſius.

† The firſt of January may be called, according to the common era, the birth-day of Chriſt; and as Pope ſays, a birth-day

"Is but the funeral of the former year."

Obſervations on Vegetables, and the Method of dreſſing them.

By Dr. Brooke, *of Exeter.*

THE Italians are convinced that raw herbs are abſolutely neceſſary for health. They generally eat them at night;

indeed fallads with oil and vinegar is chiefly their ſupper, with a glaſs or two of light wine, and a much larger quantity of cold water, which they look on as a corrector of the groſs juices that are created by the abundant uſe of animal food; and medical ſcience will be improved in proportion as the virtues of vegetables are more diſcovered.

I have travelled over the greateſt part of Europe and to Africa within the Streights, and I have obſerved that raw herbs are made uſe of by the natives in a much greater degree than in England, and they are infinitely more free from chronic diſorders than we are. This is occaſioned (ſome ſay) by our moiſt climate, or the inefficacy of our herbage; to either I cannot accede, as God is too good partially to place us on this ſpot, without the bleſſings in proportion to his other creatures, and his laws of nature are regularly conſiſtent.

" Nature's miſtakes are difficult to trace,
" A boon and ſolace to the human race."

It therefore is a duty to all who have abilities to uſe their beſt means (for the comfort of the leſs enlightened, and the poor) more cloſely to examine the vegetable ſyſtem, which cannot ſo well be explored as in ſchools or by botanic ſocieties; and as no obſerver of providential rectitude can be irreligous, we may very juſtly ſay,

" Come then, religion, with thy joyful band;
" Come hope and charity, with hand in hand;
" Come, prudence, with thy circumſpective ken,
" With piety to God and health to men.

THE METHOD OF DRESSING TABLE VEGETABLES.

Our gardens and fields throughout the year produte us a real variety of herbs ſufficient for raw fallads; which may be dreſſed according to fancy, or with vinegar and oil, or the yolk of an egg, when oil is not freſh.

Roots and herbs ſhould generally be ſtewed in a cloſe-ſtopped ſauce or ſtew-pan, by which means the natural or eſſential oils are preſerved; whereas they fly off by boiling in an uncovered veſſel, and the remaining eſſence is paſſed through a cullender, and the vegetable is become a *caput mortuum*, which is often the cauſe of producing diſagreeable ſenſations in weak ſtomachs, which would have been otherwiſe, had they been ſtewed in their own juices.

ACCOUNT

ACCOUNT *of the* CROCODILE.

[From Sonnini's Travels in Egypt.]

IN remote times, the crocodile experienced a different treatment in Egypt, according to the place in which it was to be found. In one part it was purſued with fury, and deſtroyed without pity; in another, it was an object of veneration. The inhabitants of the environs of Thebes, and of the lake Mæris, regard it as a ſacred animal. They choſe out one from among them, which they tamed; they took the greateſt care of it; its food was preſcribed, and regulated by religious books; they adorned it with ear-rings, made of gold, or of fictitious ſtones, and with a ſort of bracelets on its fore feet; an attire far too elegant for an animal ſo hideous.

At preſent, the crocodile is neither deſtroyed nor reverenced; they are left in peace, to impart their muſk ſmell to the waters of the Nile, and to clear them of fiſhes. Baniſhed to the moſt ſouthern part of Egypt, they aſſemble there in vaſt numbers: They are to be ſeen when the ſun is at its height, their heads above the water, immoveable, and appearing at a diſtance like large pieces of floating wood, gliding ſlowly down with the current, and baſking in the heat, of which they are very fond. I have ſhot ſeveral in that ſituation, and very cloſe to them; for not being often diſturbed, I could approach them eaſily. With a coat of mail, which reſiſts the ball, it is very difficult to kill them. I was in hopes of being able to fracture their ſkull by a diſcharge from my muſket, loaded with a ſlug; but whether it be, that they were equally impenetrable there, or whether, being wounded only, they retired to die, ſome time after, at the bottom of the deep, I know not; but all thoſe I ſhot made a plunge, and diſappeared immediately.

In the neighbourhood of Thebes, the ſmall boat in which I ſailed up the river was often ſurrounded by crocodiles, on a level with the ſurface; they ſaw us paſs with indifference; they neither diſcovered fear, nor any cruel intent at our approach. The noiſe occaſioned by muſket-ſhot was alone able to diſturb them in their ſtate of tranquil apathy: they never riſe upon veſſels, and how little ſoever they may be lifted above the water, nothing is to be apprehended from their attacks. But you muſt avoid thruſting your arms, or legs, into the ſtream, or you will run the riſk of getting them ſnapped off by their ſharp and pointed teeth.

Very

Very alert in the water, which they cut with rapidity, they make but ſlow progreſs on dry land; and were it not that their ſlime colour, and the bed of mud with which they cover themſelves in walking along the miry ſhores of the Nile, diſguiſes them ſo as to render them leſs perceptible, and thus expoſe you to be ſurpriſed by them, they are by no means ſo dangerous out of the watery element, in which they are ſtronger and more at liberty.

The fecundity of the crocodile would prove a terrible ſcourge to the country which it inhabits, did not numerous enemies, among which the tortoiſe of the Nile ranks the foremoſt, prevent its multiplication by devouring its eggs, and the young ones as ſoon as they are hatched. Seven young crocodiles, hatched two days before, were brought to me at Kous; they were eleven inches long, and their teeth were already very ſharp. The Egyptian who took them informed me that there were about fifty of them together, but that it was impoſſible for him to ſeize them all, becauſe their mother had arrived unexpectedly, and was eager to fly upon him. Theſe reptiles, already ſo formidable from their hideous form and their voracity, are ſtill more ſo from their immenſe length. I ſaw at the convent of Neguade the ſkin of a crocodile, thirty feet long and four broad. I have been aſſured that ſome have been found in the Nile even fifty feet in length.

A DESCRIPTION *of the* SPANISH THEATRE.

[From Southey's Travels.]

Tueſday Night.

I Am juſt returned from the Spaniſh comedy. The theatre is painted with a muddy light blue, and a dirty yellow, without gilding, or any kind of ornament. The boxes are engaged by the ſeaſon; and ſubſcribers only, with their friends, admitted to them, paying a peſetta each. In the pit are the men, each ſeated as in a great armed chair; the lower claſs ſtand behind theſe ſeats; above are the women, for the ſexes are ſeparated, and ſo ſtrictly, that an officer was broke at Madrid, for intruding into the female places. The boxes, of courſe, hold family parties. The centre box, over the entrance of the pit, is appointed for the magiſtrates, covered in the front with red ſtuff, and ornamented with the royal arms. The motto is a curious one; *Silencio y no fumar.*"

mar." "Silence, and no ſmoaking." The comedy, of courſe, was very dull to one who could not underſtand it. I was told that it contained ſome wit, and more obſcenity; but the only comprehenſible joke to me, was, "Ah!" ſaid in a loud voice by one man, and "Oh!" replied equally loud by another, to the great amuſement of the audience.

To this ſucceeded a comic opera; the characters were repreſented by the moſt ill-looking man and woman I ever ſaw. My Swediſh friend's iſland of hares and rabbits could not have a fitter king and queen. The man's dreſs was a thread-bare brown coat lined with ſilk, that had once been white, and dirty corduroy waiſtcoat and breeches; his beard was black, and his neckcloth and ſhoes dirty:—But his face! Jack Ketch might ſell the reverſion of his fee for him, and be in no danger of defrauding the purchaſer. A ſoldier was the other character, in old black velveret breeches; with a pair of gaters reaching above the knee, that appeared to have been made out of ſome blackſmith's old leathern apron. A farce followed, and the hemp-ſtretch man again made his appearance, having blacked one of his eyes to look blind. M. obſerved that he looked better with one eye than with two, and we agreed, that the loſs of his head would be an addition to his beauty.

The prompter ſtands in the middle of the ſtage, about half way above it, before a little tin ſkreen, not unlike a man in a cheeſe-toaſter. He read the whole play with the actors, in a tone of voice equally loud; and when one of the performers added a little of his own wit, he was ſo provoked as to abuſe him aloud, and ſhake the book at him. Another prompter made his appearance to the opera, unſhaved, and dirty beyond deſcription: they both uſed as much action as the actors. The ſcene that falls between the acts would diſgrace a puppet-ſhow at an Engliſh fair; on one ſide is a hill, in ſize and ſhape like a ſugar-loaf, with a temple on the ſummit, exactly like a watch-box; on the other Parnaſſus, with Pegaſus ſtriking the top in his flight, and ſo giving a ſource to the waters of Helicon; but ſuch is the proportion of the horſe to the mountain, that you would imagine him to be only taking a flying leap over a large ant-hill, and think he would deſtroy the whole œconomy of the ſtate, by kicking it to pieces. Between the hills lay a city; and in the air ſits a duck-legged Minerva, ſurrounded by flabby Cupids.

I could ſee the hair-dreſſing behind the ſcenes; a child was ſuffered to play on the ſtage, and amuſe himſelf by ſitting on the ſcene, and ſwinging backward and forward, ſo as

to

to endanger ſetting it on fire. Five chandeliers were lighted by only twenty candles. To repreſent night, they turned up two rough planks, about eight inches broad, before the ſtage lamps; and the muſicians, whenever they retired, blew out their tallow candles. But the moſt ſingular thing, is their mode of drawing up the curtain. A man climbs up to the roof, catches hold of a rope, and then jumps down; the weight of his body raiſing the curtain, and that of the curtain breaking his fall.

I did not ſee one actor with a clean pair of ſhoes. The women wore in their hair a tortoiſe-ſhell comb to part it; the back of which is concave, and ſo large as to reſemble the front of a ſmall bonnet. This would not have been inelegant, if their hair had been clean and without powder, or even appeared decent with it.

I muſt now to ſupper. When a man muſt diet on what is diſagreeable, it is ſome conſolation to reflect that it is wholeſome; and this is the caſe with the wine: but the bread here is half gravel, owing to the ſoft nature of their grind-ſtones. Inſtead of tea, a man ought to drink Adam's Solvent with his breakfaſt.

DESCRIPTION *of the* ANTELOPE.

[From Sonnini's Travels in Egypt.]

THAT pretty ſpecies of animal, (the eyes of which are conſidered in the eaſt as the ſtandard of perfection,) the antelope, is ſeen marching in numerous herds, and traverſing with ſpeed the hills and plains. Theſe are as ſhy as the wild oxen, and the approach of a ſtrange object is ſufficient to make them diſappear. Their lightneſs and celerity are unparalleled. Nature has beſtowed on them long legs, ſlender and tendinous, which, while they protect their liberty, ſeem to be another obſtacle to the deſire men might form of ſubjugating them. In fact, their legs are ſo ſlender and brittle at the ſame time, that they break in the attempt to convey the animal from place to place, or even when it is kept on a pavement, or a floor which is ſmooth enough to be ſlippery. The Arab, however, mounted on his courſer, overtakes theſe ſwift-footed animals, and throws a ſtick at them, by which their legs are moſt commonly entangled and broken; ſo that it is very rare you can procure one alive, without its being ſo crippled that it is impoſſible to keep it.

On the UTILITY *of* WHITE-WASHING *to* HEALTH.

[From a Pamphlet entitled "Information for Overſeers."]

THE poor-houſe at Biſhop Auckland has been, during the preceding ſummer, white-waſhed every ſix weeks. The method of preparing the lime, (which is rock or ſtone lime from Coxhoe, about ten miles from Auckland, and coſts, including carriage, four-pence a buſhel,) is as follows: a large tub is procured to ſhake it in, and this is filled with lime nearly to the top, cold water being poured upon it by degrees, and it being ſtirred with a ſtick that is broad at one end, until the tub is filled with lime: when the lime and water are well incorporated, and of the conſiſtence of mud, it is to be taken out of the tub with a wooden ſcoop, and ſtrained through a hair or fine wire ſieve into another veſſel, where it ſettles to the bottom in a ſolid maſs of white-waſh. There will be ſome water at the top, not imbibed by the lime; this ſhould be ſkimmed off. It is then to be mixed with cold water, till it is of the conſiſtence of thin paint, being ſtirred occaſionally while it is uſing. In this ſtate it is to be laid on with a whitening bruſh by the man and his wife who have the care of the houſe.

The quantity uſed, for white-waſhing the fifteen rooms at Auckland poorhouſe, is half a buſhel, which coſts two-pence; the expence of the four white-waſhings being, in the whole, not quite eight-pence a year. This trifling expenditure has produced a very great benefit to the poor in the workhouſe, to thoſe who viſit it, and, indeed, to the pariſh in general, that is not eaſily to be calculated. I have (ſays William Emm, Eſq. Secretary to the Biſhop of Durham, the writer of this pamphlet,) the pleaſure of being able to ſay, that there is neither diſeaſe nor vermin in our poorhouſe at preſent; but that the inhabitants are very comfortable and happy.

Anſwer by G. England, of Uplyme, to W. Bickham's Charade, inſerted November 18.

IT was the Everlaſting Lord
That form'd th' extenſive earth,
Who made the planets by his word,
And gave the ſeaſons birth.
Each flowery SPRING his greatneſs ſhows,
And autumn owns his nod;

While TIDES alternately that flow,
Proclaim their maker, God.

§ We have received the like anſwer from T. Whicker, of Exeter; G. Coulman, of Broadhempſton; Edward, of Truro; and Anna, of Wellington.

A QUESTION, *by J. Dunn, of South Molton.*

WHEN on the top of an houſe, ſeeing a balloon perpendicular over my head, then having aſcended at its ſettled height, I was informed it was as high above my head as that from the ground, and ſhould be glad if one of your ingenious correſpondents would inform me its height. Suppoſe the earth's diameter 7957,9 miles, and my eye being juſt in view of Barnſtaple the diſtance of 9 miles.

A REBUS, *by T. Churchouſe, of Yeovil.*

A Foreign fruit, ye bards, you'll find;
A ſort of corn next bring to mind;
An Engliſh meaſure of great uſe;
A term in muſic next produce;
And laſtly, gents. you'll make appear,
A month that helps to form the year:
The initials join'd aright will ſoon diſplay
A powerful inſtrument, on which I play.

A CHARADE, *by W. Bickham, Jun. of Aſhburton.*

WHEN you rove from bower to bower,
Or thro' the verdant paſtures ſtray;
Where my firſt from flower to flower,
Improves the time, and flies away;
Lo! my ſecond, where he wanders,
And boldly thro' the air he wings,
Swifter than the ſtream meanders,
Which from the cryſtal fountain flows.
My whole's a curious habitation,
And tho' complete in every part,
Yet within this ſituation
Inſtinctive genius rivals art.

POETRY.

For the WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

An occaſional Prologue, ſpoken to the new Tragedy of Arminius, (written by Arthur Murphy, Eſq.) preſented by the young Gentlemen of Mr. Weatherdon's Academy, in Newton-Abbot, at their annual Exhibition, December, 1799.

WHO has not ſeen, in city or in town,
This* comic print, "The World turn'd Upſide-down?"
In which all nature's law appears revers'd;
Piſhes in air; birds in the ſea immers'd;
Trees in the ſky; ſtars ſparkling on the green;
And topſy-turvy ev'ry thing is ſeen.

This print was firſt deſign'd to hold in view,
The contrarieties the age then knew:
'Twas by our anceſtors as ſatire held;
Folly was ridicul'd, but not expell'd;
Reflect an inſtant! No one can deny,
But 'twill to Ninety-nine as well apply:
For of this year take an impartial ſurvey,
You'll find the world the ſame—quite topſy-turvy.

Compare this age with that of good Queen Beſs;
How chang'd our manners, living, modes of dreſs!
Strange revolutions ſince her reign we trace;
The zenith then, now takes the nadir's place:
Mankind, in gen'ral, all forſake their ſphere,
And follow faſhion with a mad career:
We ſee the modern, from the ancient beau
Quite metamorphos'd, e'en from top to toe;
The full-curl'd wig, of old ſpread o'er the ſhoulders,
Conceal'd the ſhallow head from the beholders;
Now, changing this, the modiſh youth appears,
Cropp'd and trimm'd up, expoſing head and ears;
The coat, with broad-made ſkirt, clos'd fully o'er,
And button'd looſe, all up and down before;
But now the ſkirt's cut back, or off all round,
That no incumbrance to the legs be found;
You then, with ſhorten'd make, would ſmall-clothes ſee
Rather above than ought below the knee;
But now each ſpark in pantaloons muſt ſtride,
With lengthen'd ſhape, around the ancles tied;
The buckle, likewiſe, mod'rate limits knew,
Nor, as of late, encumber'd all the ſhoe;

But

* The ſpeaker holding the print in his hand.

But now thought uſeleſs, quite aſide 'tis flung;
The ſtring or ribbon graces old and young:

Ladies may ſmile, but yet they muſt confeſs,
They alter too (like gentlemen) in dreſs;
We find the taſte they priz'd in former years,
Of diff'rent caſt from that which now appears;
Rich ſilks and ſatins then you might behold,
Embroider'd o'er with ſilver or with gold;
Now varied muſlins chiefly pleaſe the ſight,
And ev'ry colour yields to pureſt white;
High-ſtruct'ur'd heads, with curls in order rang'd,
For humbler models wiſely are exchang'd;
And tow'ring hats, which late of ſilk you ſaw,
Give place to bonnets, moſtly now of ſtraw;
With changing times, as faſhion bears the ſway,
Long waiſts and ſhort, by turns have had their day;
Great alterations conſtantly we view,
And ev'ry year produces ſomething new.

Since then ſuch contrarieties appear,
They will excuſe that we turn actors here;
That we now ſhut our books, and boldly try,
In tragic mood to rant, to fight, to die;
Indeed with us it ſtands an yearly rule,
To act a play before we break up ſchool;
Purſuing this, we've always made our choice
Of one commended by the critic voice;
Now, ſtrange reverſe! we repreſent to you,
Scenes never yet produc'd to public view;
But war's the theme; and loyalty inſpires,
And th' *amor patriæ* our boſoms fires;
Th' attempt is bold: If haply we ſucceed,
With kind applauding hands, Oh crown the deed!
But if to thoſe related as before,
We ſhould to-night add many errors more;
To their true cauſe thoſe errors you'll aſſign,
The topſy-turvy year of ninety-nine.

DISAPPOINTMENT.—*A* SONNET.

AS day by day, I journey on thro' life,
Where many a thorn has ſtrew'd my cheerleſs way,
Hope's friendly ſmile, with fortune ſtill at ſtrife,
Bids me advance, to diſtant proſpects gay;
I reach the ſpot, the proſpects fade and die,
And ſcarce one tempting ſcene allures the ſick'ning eye.
Oh diſappointment! well I know thy might,
Deep has my heart imbib'd thy painful ſore;
Ev'n hope retires, and ſhuns thy hated ſight,
And paints her fairy viſions now no more.
Yet ſhould her angel light relume this breaſt,
Grateful the influence again I'll hail;
From preſent ſtorms for peaceful ſcenes draw reſt,
And bleſs each little breeze that favouring fills my ſail.